





Power for Change



The NRL is a powerful vehicle for change. Our aim is to unite communities to lead and inspire people to be the best they can be, by providing pathways and opportunities to live positive, respectful and healthy lives.

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Welcome



The NRL's Social Impact Report provides an opportunity to highlight some of the positive programs that the NRL delivers year-round, with the support of our players, clubs, and sponsors.

Our game includes people from all walks of life – and our profile provides a natural ability to educate and encourage one another.

Our programs are fundamentally aligned to the notion that rugby league is uniquely placed to inspire positive change.

To this end, our programs centre around respect, inclusion and supporting positive wellbeing; be that mental, physical, spiritual or emotional.

The following report highlights real and life-changing work being undertaken every day – work that delivers a significant impact on the lives of thousands across Australia and the Pacific each year.

My sincere thanks to the men and women that continue to play their part in ensuring a more positive and inclusive society – and I hope this report provides a greater perspective on the breadth and true impact that rugby league can deliver.

Todd Greenberg
NRL CEO



NRL Community

Community is not just part of our game. It is our game.

It is our community that binds us together and underpins everything we set out to achieve, both on and off the field.

The vision is to lead and inspire people to be the best they can possibly be by providing pathways and opportunities to live positive, respectful and healthy lives.

Our community programs have enormous reach, harnessing the popularity of the game to make a difference in communities across Australia and the Pacific.

Our programs address crucial societal issues from mental health and domestic violence, to cohesion and inclusivity, and the importance of education and overall wellbeing.

The NRL have strategically partnered with leading experts in order to deliver best-practice programs that have a tangible impact.

Our programs are centered around four primary target groups, each of which are pivotal to the future of our game:

- 1. Young People
- 2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- 3. Multicultural
- 4. Women and girls

Marquee Programs

In League In Harmony	Voice Against Violence	School to Work	State of Mind
Social cohesion program	Violence prevention initiative	Indigenous engagement initiative	Mental health initiative

Contributing Partners

Human Rights Commission	White Ribbon Australia	Australian Government	headspace
Centre for Multicultural Youth	Full Stop Foundation	Coca Cola Amatil	Black Dog Institute
Moving Forward Together Association	Our Watch	Sydney University	Kids Helpline
New South Wales Government	CIMC	NSW Business Chamber	Lifeline
Victorian Government	Fiji Women's Crisis Centre	Accor Hotels	Queensland Government
Australian Government	Holden	Jacobs Australia	Northern Territory Government
	Australian Government	Hutchinson Builders	Western Australia Government
			Australian Government

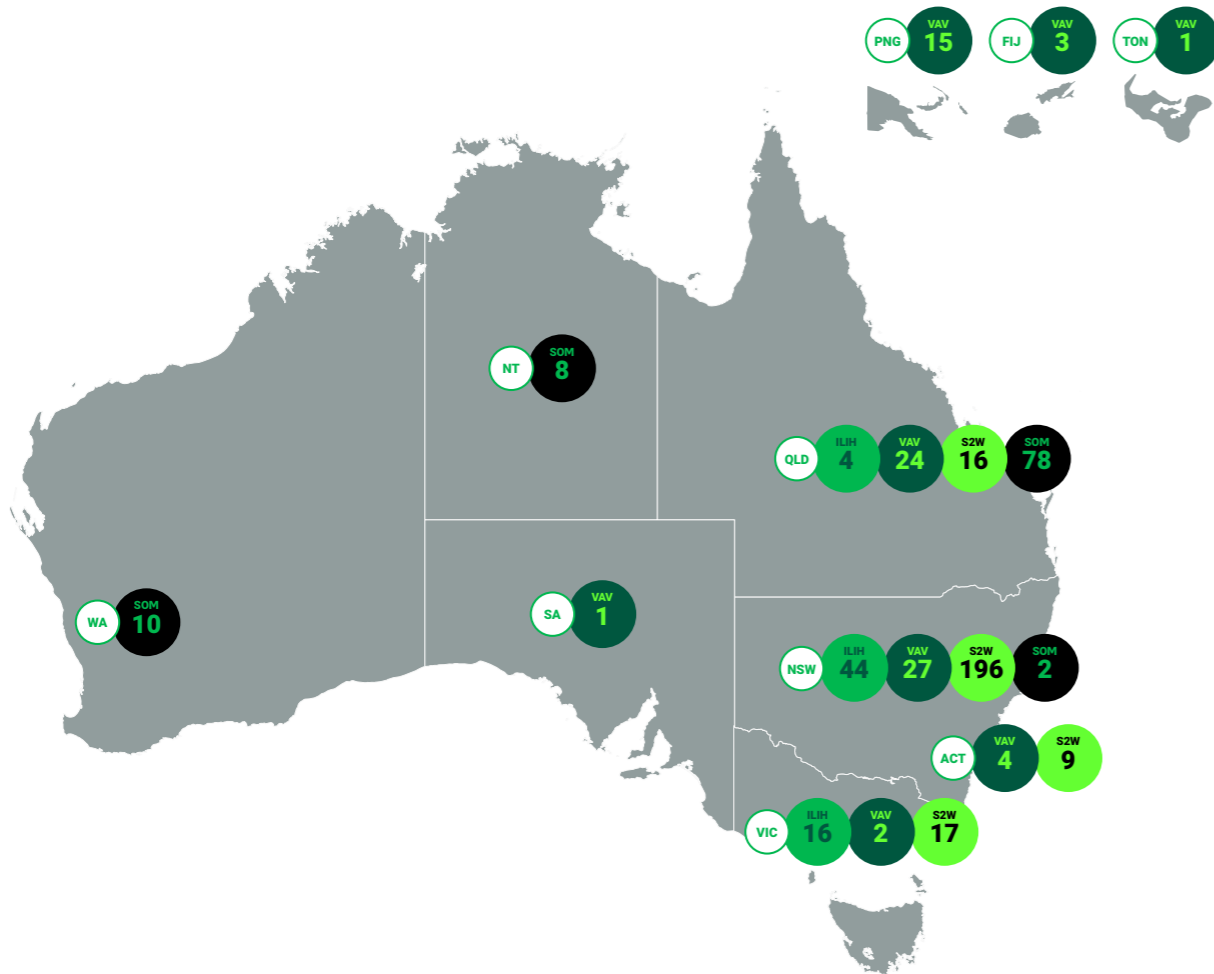
Other programs and initiatives

Inclusion Framework, Community Awards, Road to Regions, Community Program Deliverers and Player Advocates

Program Reach

Reach of our programs across Australia and the Pacific.

Throughout 2018, NRL Community delivered a wide range of programs across Australia and the Pacific. This map highlights both the reach and variety of our activities delivered to local communities.



- ILIH** In League In Harmony
No. of schools and centres that took part in 6-week program.
- VAV** Voice Against Violence
No. of clubs that took part in a workshop.
- S2W** School to Work
No. of schools involved in the program.
- SOM** State of Mind
No. of clubs that took part in 4-step program.





Measuring Impact

Social Return on Investment

Social Return On Investment (SROI) methodology is an internationally recognised approach regularly used to understand, measure and value the impact of a program or organisation.

It is a form of cost-benefit analysis that examines the social, economic and environmental outcomes created by the activities of the program and the costs of creating them. This analysis ultimately enables a ratio of benefits to be calculated. For example, a benefit ratio of 1:3 indicates that an investment of \$1 delivers \$3 of social value.

Methodology and approach

The NRL engaged a new provider, Social Ventures Australia (SVA), to independently conduct the analysis.

SVA used the Social Return on Investment Guide, written by the UK Cabinet Office in 2009 and updated in January 2012 as the basis for the report. SVA utilised a slightly different methodology than the previous provider, employing a six-stage approach.

Stage 1: Scope Project

- » Define the project scope including boundaries, timing for analysis and stakeholders.

Stage 2: Understand Change

- » Engage with stakeholders to understand the outcomes generated through the program.
- » Develop the Program Logic Models.

Stage 3: Measure Change

- » Identify and measure the outcomes experienced by end beneficiaries.

Stage 4: Value Change

- » Determine the value of the changes experienced by different stakeholders.
- » Identify relevant indicators and financial proxies to value the outcomes.
- » Define the investment for the program.
- » Apply SROI filters to account for those aspects of change that would have happened anyway or are a result of other factors.
- » Understand how long the change lasts for.
- » Define the project scope including boundaries, timing for analysis and stakeholders.

Stage 5: Calculate the SROI

- » Calculate the outcomes and compare to the investment of the program.

Stage 6: Report

- » Synthesise and present key findings.

This report presents the findings of an evaluative SROI analysis that looks at the investment made by NRL Community in four marquee programs and the outcomes experienced by end beneficiaries, as a result of these programs, in 2018.

Executive Summary

SROI analysis tells a powerful story about the impact that each of our programs are having on the NRL fan-base and wider community.

When the total investment from the NRL, government and corporate sponsors is compared to the social value created for participants and the wider community, the result is an SROI ratio of 1:4.1. That is, for every \$1 invested, \$4.10 was generated in social return.

This value is an aggregate of the four marquee NRL Community programs which individually generate the following in social return*:

Voice Against Violence	In League In Harmony
\$4.09	\$3.38
School to Work	State of Mind
\$4.28	\$4.18

* Due to changes in methodology, some SROI ratios have decreased as compared to 2016 and 2015. This decrease is solely due to the change of methodology. If the previous methodology was applied to 2018 data, the SROI ratios would increase significantly.

For every \$1 invested in NRL Community programs

\$4.10

was generated in social return.

Social Ventures Australia found that much of the social value generated can be considered unique. Without the profile, approach and reach of the NRL, it would be difficult to replicate the impact and value being created:

- » Through Power for Change marketing campaigns, the NRL can reach millions of individuals and inspire thousands of them to engage more deeply with a topic, such as mental health;
- » The groups NRL Community is often working with – young men, Indigenous populations, and rural or remote communities – are high-risk, highly disadvantaged and hard to reach that other services often struggle to engage with.

Social Ventures Australia’s analysis demonstrates that, across NRL Community’s four marquee programs significant outcomes are being generated for individuals, communities and government.

“Critical to the value of the four programs delivered by the NRL is their engagement with hard-to-reach demographics, both geographically and in terms of their willingness to engage with the central message of each program, without the presence of the NRL.”

Social Ventures Australia



In League In Harmony

The In League In Harmony program aims to promote social cohesion by addressing issues such as social disengagement, racism, gender inequality and bullying.

The program is delivered to youth between years 8-10 in high schools and centres across Australia. It consists of a six-week series of in-class workshops and field-based movement activities, plus a celebratory Gala Day.

High-achieving participants from the program are selected to become Youth Advocates. This leadership program connects students with a range of personal development opportunities with the aim of inspiring them to take action and become agents of change in their local communities.

The year in focus

In 2018, the program received a royal honour when it was hand-selected for The Duke and Duchess of Sussex to take part in during their Australian Royal Tour.

The program continued to grow in New South Wales, as well as being delivered in Victoria and Queensland for the first time. Through the support of the NSW, Victorian and Australian Governments, thousands of young people will be empowered to acknowledge and appreciate the diversity of their peers and the wider community.

Contributing partners:

Human Rights Commission; Centre for Multicultural Youth; Moving Forward Together Association; New South Wales Government; Victorian Government; Australian Government.

“Sport has a powerful ability to bind cultures, personalities and pursuits together for a common good and there is no better demonstration of this than our In League In Harmony program.”

Todd Greenberg, NRL CEO.

\$3.38

was the social value we created for every \$1 we invested in NRL In League In Harmony.

2,204

participants took part in 69 programs delivered at high-schools and centres.

90%

of participants felt more proud of their cultural, racial or religious backgrounds.

129

students were inducted into the Youth Advocate Program, which aims to develop the leaders of tomorrow.



Voice Against Violence

Overview

The Voice Against Violence program aims to assist the rugby league community to stand up, speak out and take action to prevent violence against women and children.

The program consists of a grassroots-based program aimed at 16–18 year olds in rugby league clubs throughout Australia and senior players in the Pacific, as well as a 'Power for Change' awareness campaign across television and digital platforms.

The program's objectives are:

- » To use the game's reach, profile, clubs and players to assist our community to stand up and acknowledge that a gender-based domestic violence issue exists.
- » For the game to speak out against gender-based domestic violence through clearly communicating a strong stance on the issue.
- » To take action to prevent violence against women and children by addressing the drivers of such violence, in particular gender inequality.

“The Voice Against Violence workshop uses that common language of sport to help people understand the issue of violence and the ways in which we can shape the future to make it better for the next generation.”

Alan Tongue, NRL Community Program Deliverer.

97%

of participants have a better understanding now of how domestic violence can be prevented.

97 workshops delivered across Australia, PNG and Fiji with

2,102

participants taking part in the program.

For every \$1 we invested in NRL Voice Against Violence, we created

\$4.09

of social value.

The year in focus

This year, supported by Holden, the program continued to expand both within Australia and beyond.

We had a strong focus on reaching regional communities with deliveries taking place in Weipa, South Burnett, Northern Tablelands and, for the first time, South Australia.

Further afield, program staff visited Tonga to address the Tongan Government and several local organisations who are eager to support the program. Moving forward, the NRL will deliver the program to the under-15 and under-17 players that compete in the Tonga Championships.

Contributing partners:

White Ribbon Australia; Full Stop Foundation; Our Watch; CIMC; Fiji Women's Crisis Centre; Holden; Australian Government.



School to Work

Overview

The School to Work program supports and mentors Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high-school students to stay at school, encourages them to achieve their goals, and assists them in completing their HSC and successfully transitioning into further study, training or meaningful employment.

95%

transition rate from school-based studies to further study, training or meaningful employment thanks to the one-on-one support students receive from their Project Officers.

The program, which is funded by the Australian Government through the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, has supported more than 1,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students since 2011 and, over the next three years, is expecting to provide a further 1,500 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with work experience, mentoring and leadership opportunities to ensure they achieve their career aspirations.

500

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students take part in the School to Work program per annum.

The year in focus

A new round of funding was secured last year, which means the NRL and eleven participating NRL Clubs will be able to continue supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, from South East Queensland down to Victoria, until 2020.

During this year's graduation ceremony, a new initiative was announced – the School to Work Leadership League. This alumni program will enable graduates to reconnect with the program by mentoring current participants and providing further support to the program.

The School to Work program is a combined initiative of:



Contributing partners:

Australian Government; Coca Cola Amatil; Sydney University; NSW Business Chamber; Accor Hotels; Jacobs Australia; Hutchinson Builders.



For every \$1 we invested in NRL School to Work, we created

\$4.28

of social value.

“I could not recommend this program enough. It was very beneficial for me to have someone that would listen and guide me through the pressure that comes with being in Year 12. This program has opened up support and employment opportunities that have carried on beyond high school, which I am enormously grateful for.”

Isabella Coates, School to Work participant



STATE OF MIND

NRL.COM/COMMUNITY

GOOD MENTAL HEALTH



State of Mind

For every \$1 we invested in
NRL State of Mind we created

\$4.18

of social value.

Overview

The State of Mind program supports our community with positive mental health through a four-step face-to-face program delivered to local rugby league clubs.

This grassroots program is complemented by a national 'Power for Change' campaign run in conjunction with the State of Origin series to increase awareness of mental health.

The program was developed in consultation with four expert partners. Its objectives are:

- » Use the Game's reach, profile, clubs and players to help remove the stigma surrounding mental illness.
- » Connect rugby league communities with our mental health partners and local service providers.
- » Stimulate help-seeking behaviours by providing appropriate literature and resources.
- » Educate and inform grassroots clubs through interactive face-to-face sessions that improve mental health literacy.
- » Develop elite players to be leaders in mental health advocacy within their clubs and communities.

The year in focus

In 2018, the NRL continued to work with grassroots rugby league clubs across Queensland, from Coolangatta up to the Torres Strait, taking part in the State of Mind program.

In addition, the program expanded its delivery into Western Australia and the Northern Territory for the first time, with a commitment to deliver to every rugby league club throughout both states. Sessions were delivered in Perth, Darwin, Katherine and the remote Gove Peninsula. The grassroots program is supported by Governments - Queensland (lead), Western Australia, Northern Territory and Australia.

State of Mind

3.7m

impressions during the Road to Resilience campaign period.

95

clubs across Australia participated in the grassroots program in 2018.

Road to Resilience

With the help of North Queensland Cowboys star, Michael Morgan, we launched the Road to Resilience campaign to coincide with State of Origin.

The Australian public were encouraged to join NRL players on their 21-day resilience journey. An accompanying journal was available to download that encouraged the rugby league community to talk about their mental health in the same way they do their physical health.

Contributing partners:

headspace; Black Dog Institute; Lifeline; Kids Helpline; Queensland Government; Northern Territory Government; Western Australia Government; Australian Government.

“The game has come a long way in that people are aware there is help. As a whole, we’ve accepted that, mentally, it is a real challenge for players. It is encouraged to seek help, because it’s there.”

Michael Morgan, State of Mind Player Advocate





State of Mind Outcomes

The program has been independently evaluated by yourtown since 2016.

A strong evidence base has been established that the program improves or supports:

Awareness of some of the typical signs and symptoms of mental ill health; mental health first aid knowledge; self-efficacy (confidence) to support a friend experiencing suicidal thoughts; and psychological openness towards help-seeking.

In addition, the program appears to decrease negative stigmatizing attitudes towards people with depression and anxiety, and longitudinal testing revealed that this improved attitude is maintained over time.

98%

of respondents reported that their knowledge of the signs and symptoms of mental ill health has increased.

99%

of respondents reported that they have a clearer understanding of what is 'good' mental health.

98%

of respondents reported that they were more likely to seek professional help if they encounter mental health issues in the future.

99%

of respondents reported that they had more confidence to support someone who is experiencing mental health problems.

RAP

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2018 - 2022

In February 2018, the Australian Rugby League Commission announce its fourth Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Through the development of this RAP, the NRL became the first national sporting organisation to reach "Elevate" status – which is the highest of four levels for RAPs. Rugby League was also the first national sport to develop a RAP when the program commenced in 2008.

The key focus areas for the 2018 - 2022 Elevate RAP include;

- » Celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and achievement through our NRL major events, resulting in a greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and improved relationships between all Australians.
- » Working with NRL Clubs and Rugby League organisations on the development and delivery of RAPs so that Rugby League organisations are actively contributing to reconciliation.
- » Establishing a coordinated effort across the major sporting organisations in Australia to use sport as a tool to achieve reconciliation in Australia.
- » Developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders in the game through our Indigenous Players Camps, Senior Players Advisory Group, Youth Summit and ensuring the 5% of our NRL staff who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander have tailored career development plans.

Community Awards

Champions are not just on the field

The NRL Community Awards have become the most significant opportunity for our game's unsung heroes to receive the recognition they deserve for the tireless work they do.

Last year, we brought the Award presentations back to the winner's communities. From Bondi to Blackall, we surprised each winner and presented their award in person surrounded by those who know and appreciate their efforts. Here are just some of their stories:

Jessica Skinner, NRL Women In League Achievement Award 2018

Jess has been a pioneer for the women's rugby league in Western NSW, implementing the inaugural League Tag academy program and developing youth across remote communities in the Barwon Darling, Outback and Castlereagh Leagues.

Dedicated to changing the perceptions of women's sport and developing pathways to the elite levels, Jess was also instrumental in the development of the first women's Western Rams tackle team, giving women a pathway to representative rugby league including State of Origin and the NRL.

Jess's hard work has resulted in six players gaining selection to the NSW Southern Country side and the opportunity to push for selection for the NSW Country side. Following the success of the women's 9s tackle competition, Jess insisted there was a need for a 13s side, bringing it to life in 2018, comprising of four clubs, each with a senior and under 18s team.

Jess is immersed in the sport, attending a training session, game or function six days a week. She is the coordinator for rugby league at her local school and regularly takes teams to competitions across the state. It is estimated that Jess has travelled close to 12,000kms to assist and provide opportunities for women to be involved in the game this year alone

"I want to be a role model for our girls. This game offers a chance to not only to be the best player you can be but it teaches you to be resilient, to be strong, and independent while building connections."

Jessica Skinner,

NRL Women In League Achievement Award 2018



Max and Lorna Dawes, NRL Volunteer of the Year Award 2018

Max and Lorna Dawes are life members of the Coffs Harbour Comets, clocking up over 40 years of service in a wide range of volunteer and administrative roles.

Having begun their involvement as committee members in 1978 when their sons took up the sport, Max and Lorna have gone on to hold various positions including Senior League President, Secretary, Treasurer, General Committee Member, Ground Announcer, and Ground Licensee; all whilst managing the canteen on a weekly basis – a job which they still hold to this day.

The pair continue to coordinate social functions and annual fundraisers which provide significant funds for the club. And, most importantly, Max and Lorna have supported every family and player who pass through the Comets, acting as surrogate parents to many young players.

Ryan James – Ken Stephen Medal 2018

A role model, captain and leader – Ryan James is the Gold Coast Titans' most active player in the community despite rarely missing a game.

From his very first day at the club, Ryan has been involved in community work on the Gold Coast and beyond, winning a host of off-field accolades along the way.

Following in his mentor Preston Campbell's footsteps, Ryan has taken inspiration from his efforts and was taken under the wing of the Titans legend at an early age.

Ryan is proud of his Indigenous culture, reflected by his involvement in the club's Deadly Futures Program and NAIDOC Week activities, as well as the active role he has played in the Titan's Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.

True to his roots, Ryan is both an ambassador and life member for his boyhood club, the Bilambil Jets, recently sponsoring their Indigenous Round jerseys.

An ambassador for the Starlight Children's Foundation since 2015, in recent times, Ryan has shaved his hair to fundraise for a young fan and helped launch the 2 Artie Academy in Rockhampton.





Road to Regions

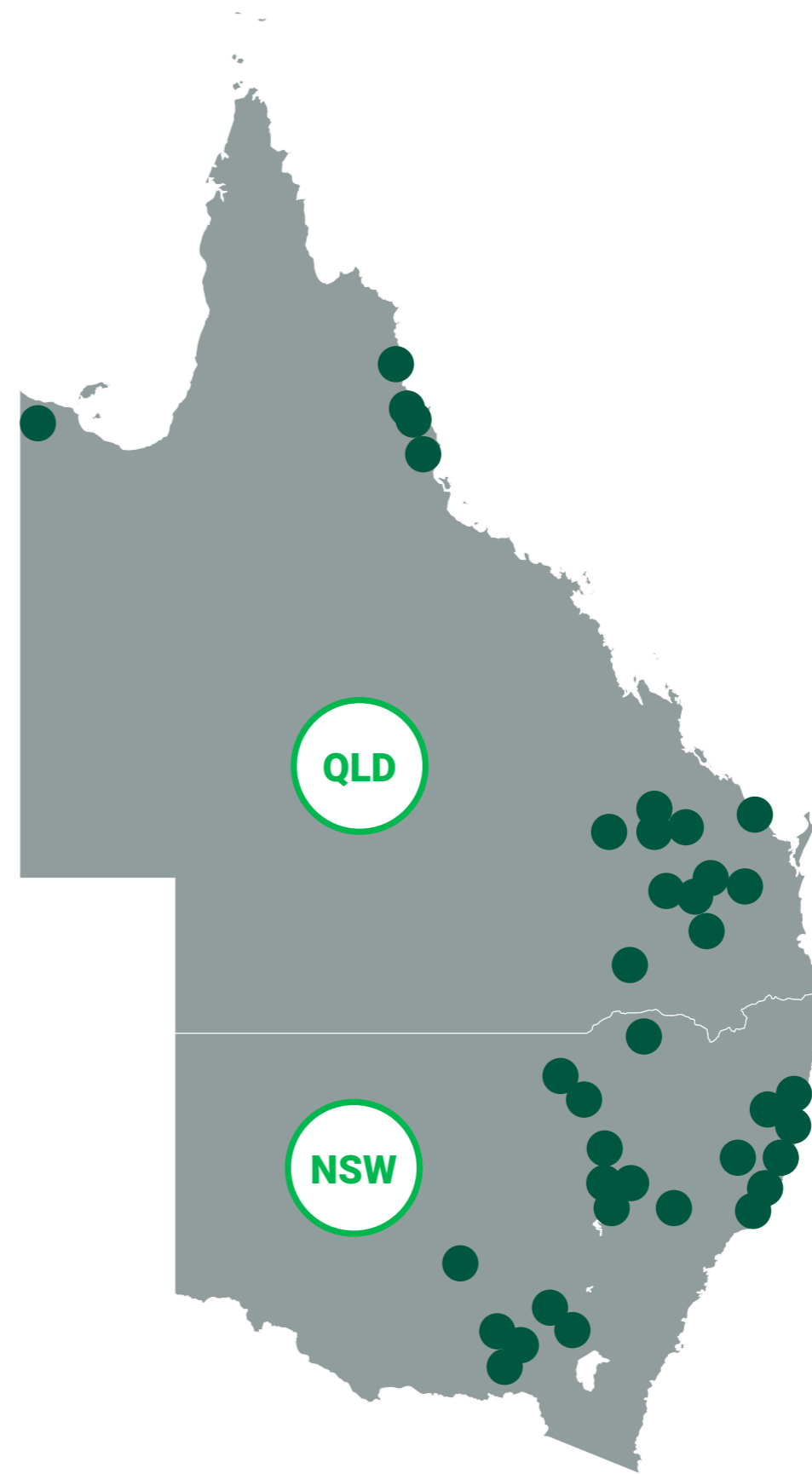
Rugby league in your community

Across a single week in February, the likes of Iosia Solila, Jack Bird and Brenton Lawrence took time out of their training schedules to visit regional towns across Queensland and New South Wales.

The players visited schools, promoted positive education and wellbeing messages, and lent a hand at junior rugby league clubs as the NRL thanked some of the thousands of fans from rural and regional Australia that support the game from afar.

“It’s a once-in-a-lifetime and truly rewarding experience”

Simaima Taufa, Community Program Deliverer



89

community, education or participation programs delivered across one single week.

8,316

participants across 16 rugby league clubs, 49 schools and 43 localities.

26,404kms

travelled by our NRL players to meet our rural and regional fans.

● Locations visited

Community Program Deliverers

Dedicated to making a difference

In 2018, a host of former NRL and current NRLW players were appointed as NRL Community Program Deliverers.

Their primary focus is to assist in the delivery of our State of Mind and Voice Against Violence programs to grassroots rugby league clubs across Australia and the Pacific.

The 2018 list includes:

- » Alan Tongue
- » Antonio Winterstein
- » Bronson Harrison
- » Clinton Toopi
- » Dan Hunt
- » David Shillington
- » Joe Galuvao
- » Maddison Studdon
- » Matt Ballin
- » Nathan Friend
- » Nathan Hindmarsh
- » Preston Campbell
- » Renae Kunst
- » Ruan Sims
- » Samantha Bremner
- » Simaima Taufua



“I want to give back to the game which has given me so much. I’ve seen firsthand the difference rugby league can make to people’s lives, developing champions no matter where they come from. To me, rugby league is a vehicle for change.”

Preston Campbell, Community Program Deliverer

Community Player Advocates

A number of current NRL players have nominated themselves to be Advocates for our State of Mind and Voice Against Violence programs. These players will complement the activities of our Community Program Deliverers.

After thorough training and guidance from our expert partners, these players use their voice and profile to amplify key messages and make a positive difference in the community.

The list for 2018 includes:

- » Alex Glenn, Brisbane Broncos (VAV)
- » Jayden Okunbor, Canterbury Bankstown Bulldogs (SOM)
- » Angus Crichton, South Sydney Rabbitohs¹ (SOM/VAV)
- » Joel Thompson, Manly Warringah Sea Eagles (SOM)
- » Cameron King, Parramatta Eels² (SOM/VAV)
- » Joseph Tapine, Canberra Raiders (VAV)
- » Christian Welch, Melbourne Storm (SOM/VAV)
- » Luke Lewis, Cronulla Sharks (SOM/VAV)³
- » Dale Copley, Gold Coast Titans (SOM)
- » Michael Morgan, North Queensland Cowboys (SOM)
- » Dale Finucane, Melbourne Storm (SOM)
- » Paul Momirovski, Sydney Roosters (SOM)⁴
- » Daniel Alvaro, Parramatta Eels (SOM/VAV)
- » Tariq Sims, St George Illawarra Dragons (SOM/VAV)
- » Darius Boyd, Brisbane Broncos (SOM)
- » Wayde Egan, Penrith Panthers (SOM)
- » David Gower, Parramatta Eels (SOM/VAV)
- » Frank Winterstein, Manly Warringah Sea Eagles (SOM/VAV)

¹Since joined the Sydney Roosters.

²Since left the Parramatta Eels.

³Since retired from the National Rugby League.

⁴Since joined the Wests Tigers.



“I want to use my platform to help others in a positive way; help raise awareness, and reach an even wider audience for these important programs. I am always looking for opportunities to do more for the community and I aspire to be a good role model for all, especially my two sons. There is help available and people are here and willing to listen.”

Frank Winterstein,

State of Mind and Voice Against Violence Player Advocate

[NRL.COM/COMMUNITY](https://nrl.com/community)

